



Dr. John Hellerstedt
Commissioner
Texas Department of State Health Services

Dr. John Hellerstedt became commissioner of the Texas Department of State Health Services on January 1, 2016.

Hellerstedt, who last served the state as medical director for the Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program Division, left his position as chief medical officer at the Seton Family of Hospitals to join DSHS.

A graduate of the University of Pittsburgh medical school, Hellerstedt moved to Austin in 1981 after completing his residency at the University of Texas-San Antonio Health Science Center. He spent 18 years working as a pediatrician at the Austin Regional Clinic, where he also chaired the pediatric department.

Following his service with the state, Hellerstedt served as vice president of medical affairs for Dell Children's Medical Center of Central Texas.

Hellerstedt takes over for Kirk Cole, who served as interim commissioner since Dr. David Lakey left DSHS in January 2015.

DSHS is one of the state's largest agencies with a staff of 12,000 and an annual budget of \$3.2 billion. The agency oversees programs such as disease prevention and bioterrorism preparedness, family and community health services, environmental and consumer safety, regulatory programs and mental health and substance abuse prevention and treatment programs.